

MEDIA ALERT

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SEE ME, SEE YOU: EARLY VIDEO INSTALLATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIA GETS A FULL REFRESH WITH NEW ARTWORKS FOR PART 2 OF THE EXHIBITION



Singapore, 10 October 2023 – The second part of National Gallery Singapore’s free exhibition *See Me, See You: Early Video Installation of Southeast Asia* will open on 13 October 2023 to bring visitors a new line-up of refreshed works by five artists - **Heri Dono** (Indonesia), **Krisna Murti** (Indonesia), **Hasnul Saidon** (Malaysia), **Ray Langenbach** (USA/Malaysia) and **Vincent Leow** (Singapore).

This is the world’s first-ever retrospective survey of early video installation of Southeast Asia, uncovering new perspectives of the region’s history of video installation art. As a museum dedicated to modern Southeast Asian art, the Gallery places importance in highlighting the contribution of video art pioneers and to fill the gap in Southeast Asian art history.

In Part 2, the Gallery has commissioned the recreation of the video installation artworks from the late 1980s and 1990s to continue the retrospective survey which offers a fascinating look at the pivotal moments when video installation first emerged in the region. The artists broke away from conventional art forms of paintings and sculptures that were prevalent at that time, and adopted an interdisciplinary approach by combining installation, performance and audience participation together with video, leading to a new form of art.



Refreshed line up of recreated video art installations

The exhibition reopens at Ngee Ann Kongsi Concourse Gallery at Level B1 of National Gallery Singapore. The five works include original footage from the installations' first exhibitions, as well as reinterpretations that reflect its contemporary presentation at the Gallery. For most of the artworks, this will be the first time they are exhibited in decades.

Featuring steel branches that emerge from dark gravel and concrete, **Singapore artist Vincent Leow's *Dream World (1990, remade 2023)*** is a meditation upon the impact of rapid urban development on the natural environment. Leow juxtaposes these raw construction materials with handheld footage of moving through foliage, presenting the tensions that arise between envisioned and man-made realities.

Indonesian artist Heri Dono's *Hoping to Hear from You Soon (1992)* was amongst the first from Southeast Asia to use video projection, and the artwork investigates the relationship between moving image and the long tradition of shadow puppetry in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Its structure alludes to everyday roadside eateries, where conversations could unfold under the cover of warung tarps, unfettered by state surveillance.

Indonesian artist Krisna Murti's *12 Hours in the Life of Agung Rai, the Dancer (1993, remade 2014/2023)* explores the representation of traditions through technological tools and local natural materials. The installation's 2023 iteration features dried leaves found in Singapore, contrasting this natural material to the videos, which are the work's technological component.

Inspired by the birth of his daughter, **Hasnul Saidon from Malaysia** explored cycles of growth and reproduction in ***In the Precious Garden (1993, remade 2023)***. The work features inscribed text on a circular cloth to present a reading experience without a prescribed introduction or conclusion. Three television screens placed along the cloth's perimeter suggest the orbit of two spheres, evoking a sense of the intersections between manifold layers of reality.

Ray Langenbach's *The Language Lesson (1989, remade 2023)* is a product of his experiences living abroad. The knowledge he acquired when he moved to Malaysia and that which he gleaned from American culture surfaced within him a sense of cultural duality, which he sought to explore through this artwork. Two rattan mannequins face each other, sharing unanswered questions in Malay and English. Visitors listening in can formulate their own responses.

More information on the artworks can be found in **Annex A**.

The exhibition title, *See Me, See You*, takes its name from the 1986 artwork by Jean Marie Syjuco, *See Me, See You (Revenge of the Giraffe)*, which was featured in Part 1 of the exhibition, and incorporated live feed from a video camera. It refers to the video camera's immediacy and documentary potential, as well as its cultural significance as a tool that enables people to make their lives visible. From its nascent years until today, video installation has



unveiled modes of affecting audiences through layered spatial and temporal experiences, gaining ground as a medium that is now a staple of contemporary art.

Through careful recreation and staging, the second set of early video works will be available for visitors to experience from 13 October 2023. We welcome visitors to experience the unique video presentations that stand in contrast to how we encounter video today, engaging with these innovative works to further understand and appreciate the region's art history.

More information can be found in the following **Annexes** and at www.nationalgallery.sg/see-me-see-you. Media assets may be found [here](#), including assets from Part 1 of the exhibition.

- Annex A: *See Me, See You Part 2* Artwork Details and Artist Bio
- Annex B: *See Me, See You Part 2* Programmes

Exhibition details

Exhibition dates	13 October 2023 to 4 February 2024
Venue	National Gallery Singapore 1 St Andrew's Road, Singapore 178957 The Ngee Ann Kongsi Concourse Gallery, Level B1, City Hall Wing
Tickets	Admission is free for all

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National Gallery Singapore

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About National Gallery Singapore

National Gallery Singapore is a leading visual arts institution that oversees the world's largest public collection of Singapore and Southeast Asian modern art. Situated at the birthplace of modern Singapore, in the heart of the Civic District, the Gallery is housed in two national monuments - City Hall and former Supreme Court - that have been beautifully restored and transformed into this exciting 64,000 square metre venue. Reflecting Singapore's unique heritage and geographical location, the Gallery aims to be a progressive museum that creates dialogues between the art of Singapore, Southeast Asia and the world to foster and inspire a creative and inclusive society. This is reflected in our collaborative research, education, long-term and special exhibitions, and innovative programming. The Gallery also works with





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international museums such as Centre Pompidou, Musée d'Orsay, Tate Britain, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo (MOMAT) and National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Korea (MMCA), to jointly present Southeast Asian art in the global context, positioning Singapore as a key node in the global visual arts scene.

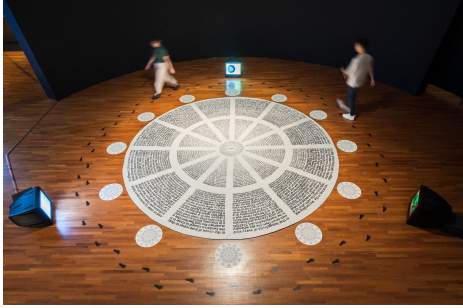
In 2020, the Gallery was the only museum in Southeast Asia that received a ranking in The Art Newspaper's annual global survey of attendance at art museums, taking 20th place. It was the first museum in Asia to receive the Children in Museums Award by the European Museum Academy and Hands On! International Association of Children in Museums in 2018. The Gallery also won the awards for "Best Theme Attraction" at TTG Travel Awards 2017, "Best Attraction Experience", "Breakthrough Contribution to Tourism" and "Best Customer Service (Attractions)" at the prestigious Singapore Tourism Awards in 2016 for its role in adding to the vibrancy of Singapore's tourism landscape.


Annex A: Artwork Details and Artist Bio

Artwork	Description and artist bio
 <p>Vincent Leow. <i>Dream World</i>. 1990, remade 2023. Concrete, painted steel, pigment on volcanic rock, photographs, teak frame, glass, video. Video: single channel, 4:3 format, colour, 11 min 3 sec. Collection of the artist. Image credit: National Gallery Singapore.</p>	<p>Featuring steel branches that emerge from a grid-like formation of concrete pillows and gravel, Vincent Leow meditates upon the impact of rapid urban development on the natural environment. Leow juxtaposes these materials with handheld footage of trees against the sky, presenting a contrast between natural and man-made realities.</p> <p>First exhibited at the National Museum Art Gallery in 1990, <i>Dream World</i> may be the earliest video artwork made in Singapore. It originally featured tree branches and canvas pillows. For the 2023 version, the artist chose to use raw construction materials, which are emblematic of today's urbanised world. Amongst the branches and pillows, there is a small canvas object encased within a wooden frame and glass. Behind the glass, pictures of a single unit of the pillow and branch double exposed with the artist's portrait serve as visual metaphors of the surreal landscapes envisioned by the artist.</p> <p>Remade as a dystopian tableau, <i>Dream World</i> asks: Do we still have the capacity to dream in our increasingly urbanised world? Leow's laborious and layered editing process used for the original video, which is now lost, reflects his meditative approach to engaging with nature through technology. Hours of footage were trimmed down to a condensed clip. Originally played on VHS, these videos were repeatedly re-recorded to introduce flaws and distortions. The artist compares this manual process of manipulating the moving image to painting. His approach to video was informed by experimental and non-linear approaches in filmmaking.</p> <p><u>About Vincent Leow</u> Vincent Leow (b. 1961, Singapore) is an artist and art educator whose practice spans a wide range of genres, including sculpture, installation, performance art and painting. Leow was awarded the Cultural Medallion in 2022 as well as the Culture Award (2002) by the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry for his contribution to the arts. He represented Singapore in the 52nd Venice Biennale of Contemporary Art (2007); the 9th Indian Triennial of Contemporary Art, New Delhi,</p>

	<p>India (1997); and the 1st Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane, Australia (1993). He has a Diploma in Fine Art (Sculpture) from the LASALLE College of Arts; a Master of Fine Arts from the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA); and Doctorate of Fine Art from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT).</p>
 <p>Heri Dono. <i>Hoping to Hear from You Soon</i>. 1992. Oil on canvas, oil on cardboard, concrete blocks, two video projectors, video. Video: two channels, 4:3 format, colour and sound (stereo), 46 min 50 sec. Collection of the artist. Image credit: National Gallery Singapore.</p>	<p>Amongst the first from Southeast Asia to use video projection, <i>Hoping to Hear from You Soon</i> (1992) investigates the relationship between the moving image and the long tradition of shadow puppetry in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.</p> <p>Created in 1992, the artwork was produced by Heri Dono in response to the last decade of President Suharto's New Order regime in Indonesia, a period when subversive speech and writing were suppressed in public and educational spheres. The New Order was known for advancing corruption, collusion and nepotism.</p> <p>The tent-like structure of the artwork alludes to that of <i>warung</i>, everyday roadside eateries, where conversations unfolded, hidden from the watchful eyes of the state. Projected on the painted canvases, two silhouettes speak and gesticulate to each other. While their dialogue is inaudible, the installation is accompanied by an ambient soundscape designed by Heri Dono's contemporary, Joseph Praba. The symbols on the <i>warung's</i> tarp are subtle clues as to what they discuss.</p> <p>Suspended between the two tarps are three inverted red figures reminiscent of bats, known to be nocturnal creatures, which allude to how the conversations took place from the evening into the wee hours of the morning. Evocative of <i>wayang kulit</i>, traditional Indonesian shadow puppetry, these figures invite viewers to contemplate the nature of politics as shadow play.</p> <p><u>About Heri Dono</u> Heri Dono (b. 1960, Indonesia) combines the traditional art form of <i>wayang kulit</i> (shadow puppet) with contemporary artistic modes and mediums, including painting, installation and performance art. He weaves characters from Indonesian folklore into his own tales, blending them together with contemporary themes and motifs. He is known for artworks that comment on culture, society and humanity through distortion and</p>

	<p>humour. Dono has participated in international festivals including the Kochi-Muziris Biennale, Venice Biennale, Guangzhou Triennial, Gwangju Biennale and Asia Pacific Triennial.</p>
 <p>Krisna Murti. <i>12 Hours in the Life of Agung Rai, the Dancer</i>. 1993, remade 2014/2023. Two cathode-ray tube televisions, flat screen television, tree branches, dried leaves, 98 inkjet prints on acrylic, video. 4 videos: three channels, each 4:3 format, colour and sound (stereo), varying durations totalling 4 hours 50 min 10 sec. Collection of National Gallery Singapore. Image credit: National Gallery Singapore.</p>	<p><i>12 Hours in the Life of Agung Rai, the Dancer</i> (1993, remade 2014/2023) explores how traditions can be represented through technological tools and natural materials sourced locally. To Krisna Murti, kecak dancer Agung Rai is an apt representation of the persistence of tradition in Bali, Indonesia despite changes brought about by modern technology. Over several hours, Murti documented Agung Rai's daily routines, including his life and community beyond the stage.</p> <p>Notably, kecak has a complicated history. Cocreated by local Balinese and Western expatriates in the 1930s, it was developed mainly to be performed for tourists. Through his prolonged documentation of Agung Rai, Murti asserts the performer's humanity and the importance of representing him past ritualised performances of "tradition." Video becomes a means to show a more intimate and even mundane reality behind the scenes.</p> <p>According to the artist, the installation should adapt and draw materials from the environment of the place of exhibition. The first iteration of the artwork in 1993 featured rice husks, an organic material readily available in Indonesia, whereas the 2023 iteration uses dried leaves found in Singapore. These natural materials are set in contrast to the video as technology and exemplify Murti's site-specific approach to installation.</p> <p><u>About Krisna Murti</u> Krisna Murti (b. 1957, Indonesia; d. 2023, Indonesia) is a pioneer of Indonesian video art who began producing installations in the 1990s. He is known for works that explore the impact of digitalisation on culture and society. He graduated from the Institut Teknologi Bandung (ITB) in 1981. Krisna was a guest lecturer in New Media Studies at the Postgraduate School of the Indonesian Arts Institute (ISI) in Yogyakarta from 2013. He has held more than 30 solo exhibitions in Indonesia and abroad; participated in residencies and conferences in Japan, Singapore, Cuba, Russia, Australia, Germany and the Netherlands; and presented artworks in</p>

	<p>international biennales such as Gwangju, Venice and Havana.</p>
 <p>Hasnul Saidon. <i>In the Precious Garden</i>. 1993, remade 2023. Ink on cotton fabric, digital print on canvas, digital print on clear vinyl sticker, three cathode-ray tube televisions, video. 3 videos: single channel, 4:3 format, colour and sound (stereo), 59 min 57 sec each. Collection of the artist. Image credit: National Gallery Singapore.</p>	<p>Inspired by the birth of his daughter, Hasnul Saidon explores cycles of growth and reproduction in this artwork <i>In the Precious Garden</i> (1993, remade 2023). The motif of the circle, which symbolises the conception of life, wholeness and eternity, lies at the heart of <i>In the Precious Garden</i> and manifests in several ways.</p> <p>Drawing from the texts of 13th-century Sufi mystic Rumi and 11th-century philosopher Abdul Qadir Jilani, Hasnul inscribed a text-poem, which invites multiple interpretations, on a circular cloth in a mandala-like configuration.</p> <p>In this arrangement, viewers may access the artwork at a point of their choosing and read the text without a prescribed introduction or conclusion. As viewers amble around the cloth, they trace the circular path of its circumference, thereby also participating in the artwork's cyclicity.</p> <p>Placed along the cloth's perimeter, three television screens feature three video collages, each nearly an hour long, where text is overlaid on images of tree branches, abstract forms, fetal imagery and photographs of the artist's loved ones.</p> <p>Within each monitor, two smaller circles moving at different speeds suggest spheres orbiting through the three screens, evoking manifold metaphysical dimensions. Looping at 5 minutes per revolution and 25 seconds per revolution respectively, the spheres enact a cyclical, infinite pattern, and highlight Hasnul's fractal treatment of time, which refers to proportions found in nature.</p> <p><u>About Hasnul Saidon</u> Hasnul Saidon (b. 1965, Malaysia) explores media, information technology and their impact on cultural identity through a range of mediums including video, painting and mixed media installation. Hasnul graduated from the Art and Design Department of the MARA Institute of Technology, Malaysia and the Southern Illinois University, USA and has an MA in Electronic Art from the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, USA. Currently, He is Associate Professor of Electronic and New Media Art at University Sains Malaysia (USM) and</p>

	<p>Director of the Muzium & Galeri Tuanku Fauziah (MGTF), USM.</p>
 <p>Ray Langenbach. <i>The Language Lesson</i>. 1989, remade 2023. Two cathode-ray tube televisions, two rattan mannequins, spray paint on LED bulbs, cotton fabric, light sequencer, video. 72 videos: two channels, each 4:3 format, colour and sound (stereo), varying durations totalling 18 min 43 sec with light sequencing. Performance and script: Ray Langenbach with Zainab Wahiddin. Collection of the artist. Image credit: National Gallery Singapore.</p>	<p>Ray Langenbach's <i>The Language Lesson</i> was created when he first arrived in Malaysia and was learning its language and culture. These new knowledges, which bore similarities and differences to that gleaned from American culture, surfaced within him a sense of cultural duality.</p> <p>Two television “heads” mounted on rattan mannequins face each other. The television on the female mannequin plays a video of a Malaysian woman asking a question in Malay. Across from her, on the male mannequin, a video of the artist responds with an English translation of the question. This repeats with different questions. At first, the questions are basic and benign, as expected of any language lesson, but they become increasingly personal and provocative. The questions are deliberately left unanswered, allowing visitors to formulate their own responses.</p> <p>A recurring apparatus in Langenbach's work, the checkered fabric is inspired by <i>saput poleng</i>, a black-and-white textile that symbolises balance between two opposing forces and is used by Balinese Hindus to wrap temples and as ceremonial dress. The cloth's pattern is also reminiscent of chess, a board game that is binary in nature.</p> <p>Bulbs, arranged along the edges of the fabric, feature symbols from Christianity and Islam—the crucifix and the crescent moon with a star. Informed by his studies in comparative religion, Langenbach presents these symbols in a balanced, equal manner, without prescribing their value or meaning, allowing viewers to make inferences on the religions' relationship freely.</p> <p><u>About Ray Langenbach</u> Ray Langenbach (b. 1948, USA), who is based in Malaysia, creates conceptual artworks and performances, convenes gatherings, writes on cultural theory, performance and queer culture. He has presented his work throughout Asia-Pacific, Europe and the United States, and has curated exhibitions and performance art events in Malaysia, Singapore, Palestine, USA and Germany. Langenbach's writings on Southeast Asian performance, propaganda and visual culture have appeared in journals and books. His video</p>



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	<p>archive of Southeast Asian demonstrations, socio-political events and performances resides at Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong; the International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam; National Gallery Singapore; Singapore Art Museum and Fukuoka Museum of Art. His documentary videos were recently screened at documenta fifteen. Formerly Professor of Live Art and Performance Studies, University of the Arts Helsinki, Langenbach is currently the Star Foundation Professor of Artistic Research, Creative Industries, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia.</p>
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Annex B: Programmes

Talks, Tours and Programmes Visit www.nationalgallery.sg/see-me-see-you to register for the programmes and tours.	
<i>Keynote Lecture Dr Edwin Jurriëns</i>	
Date and Time:	13 October 2023, Friday, 6pm – 7pm
Venue:	The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium, Level B1, City Hall Wing, National Gallery Singapore
Admission Details:	Free, registration required via nationalgallery.sg/see-me-see-you
Description:	In this keynote lecture by art historian Dr Edwin Jurriëns (Associate Professor & Convenor of the Indonesian Studies programme at the Asia Institute of the Faculty of Arts, The University of Melbourne), he will delve into the socio-cultural contexts, which drove the development of video installation art in the 1980s and 1990s in Southeast Asia and draw links between this innovation and the stories behind the artworks in the exhibition.
<i>Curator Tours</i>	
Date and Time:	15 October 2023, Sunday, 11am – 12pm 21 October 2023, Saturday, 2pm – 3pm
Venue:	The Ngee Ann Kongsi Concourse Gallery, Level B1, City Hall Wing, National Gallery Singapore
Admission Details:	Free, registration required
Description:	Delve into the curatorial narratives and specialised conservation techniques unique to video installation art with our curators and conservators in this tour experience.
<i>Films in Conjunction with See Me, See You: Early Video Installation of Southeast Asia</i>	
Date and Time:	Day One: 14 Oct 2023, Saturday, 3pm – 5.30pm Day Two: 15 Oct 2023, Sunday, 3pm – 5.30pm
Venue:	The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium, Level B1, City Hall Wing, National Gallery Singapore
Admission Details:	Free, registration required
Description:	This two-day film programme held on the opening weekend of Part 2 of <i>See Me, See You</i> seeks to expand on propositions about the medium and cultural specificities of analogue video and television that appear in the exhibition's artworks. It will present a selection of single channel

	<p>works by Southeast Asian artists that reveal the workings and effects of the television apparatus, specifically the ways in which it has blurred the distinction between subject and object, the viewer and the viewed.</p> <p>Works featured are Ho Tzu Nyen's <i>4x4 - Episodes of Singapore Art</i> on 14 October (Day One), and Tan Pin Pin's <i>9th August</i>, Apichatpong Weerasethakul's <i>Haunted Houses</i>, Eric Khoo's <i>Home VDO</i>, and Tad Ermitaño's <i>Cathode Jam</i> on 15 October (Day Two). These provocations by other artists working with the moving image at the turn of the century, offer a view of how this mass-consumed technology has continued to shift the gaze in both public and private spaces.</p> <p>There will be post-screening dialogues with artists Ho Tzu Nyen and Tan Pin Pin on 14 October and 15 October respectively.</p>
<p>Artist Talk Heri Dono</p>	
Date and Time:	25 November 2023, Saturday, 3.30pm – 4.30pm
Venue:	The Spine Hall, Level B1, City Hall Wing, National Gallery Singapore
Admission Details:	Free, registration required
Description:	<p>One of the first artists in Southeast Asia to work with video projection, Heri Dono's illustrious artistic practice features significant material and media experimentation. This is evident in his work <i>Hoping to Hear from You Soon</i>, which alludes to traditional shadow puppetry and roadside eateries commonly seen in his hometown in Indonesia. In this talk, we discover how the artist utilised the screen as a tool for artistic expression and the processes behind his practice, including his single-channel video work <i>Political Clowns</i>.</p>
<p>Artist Workshop Ray Langenbach</p>	
Date and Time:	20 January 2024, Saturday & 21 January 2024, Sunday, 2pm – 6pm
Venue:	Various locations
Admission Details:	S\$15, registration required
Description:	<p>In this two-day workshop, artist-educator Ray Langenbach invites participants to consider the processes behind how we categorise objects and their associated narratives through dialogue and co-creation exercises. Participants will also hear from the artist on selected artworks in the Gallery and take away readings on the topic of materiality in art.</p>